

## MY GRANDMOTHER'S BRACELET.

BY MRS. C. LEE HENTZ.

WE were all seated in a piazza, one beautiful summer's night. The moonbeams quivered through the interlacing vines that crept fantastically over the latticework that surrounded it. My grandmother sat in an arm-chair in the centre of the group, her arms quietly folded across her lap, her hair white and silvery as the moonbeams that lingered on its parted folds. She was the handsomest old lady I ever saw, my revered grandmother, and in the spring of her years had been a reigning belle. To me she was still beautiful, in the gentle quietude of life's evening shades, the dignity of chastened passions, waiting hopes, and sustaining religious faith. I was her favourite grandchild, and the place near her feet, the arm laid across her lap, the up-lifted eye fixed steadfastly on her face, constant as the recurrence of the still night hour, told a story of love and devotion on my part, which defied all competition. As I sat this night, leaning on her lap, I held her hand in mine, and the thought that a few more years, that hand must be cold in the grave, incapable of answering the glowing pressure of mine, made me draw a deep inspiration, and I almost imagined her complexion assumed an ashen hue, prophetic of death. The weather was warm, and she wore a large loose wrapper, with flowing sleeves, left unconfined at the wrist. As I moved her hand, the folds of the sleeve fell back, and something pure and bright glittered in the moonlight. She made a movement to draw down the sleeve, but the eager curiosity of childhood was not to be eluded. I caught her wrist, and baring it to the gaze of all, exclaimed,

"Only think—grandmother has got on a bracelet—a pearl bracelet. Who would think of her indulging in such finery? Here are two sweet pearl lilies set together in a golden clasp, with golden leaves below them. Why, grandmother, you must be setting up for a bride!"

"It was a bridal gift," replied she, sliding the bracelet on her shrunken arm, "a bridal gift, made long ago. It was a foolish thought, child. I was looking over a casket, where I have deposited the choicest treasures of my youth, and I clasped it on my wrist, to see how my arm had fallen from its fair proportions. My mind became so lost in thinking of the story of this gem, I forgot to restore it to the place where it has so long lain, slumbering with the hoarded memories of other days."

"A story!" we all eagerly exclaimed,—"please tell it—you promised us one to-night."

"Ah! children, it is no fairy tale, about bright genii, and enchanted palaces, and ladies so beautiful that they bewitch every one who comes within the

magic reach of their charms. It is a true tale, and has some sad passages in it."

"Grandmother," said I, in a dignified manner, "I hope you don't think me so silly as not to like any thing because it is true. I have got over the Arabian Nights long ago, and I would rather hear something to make me feel sorry than glad,—I always do feel sad when the moon shines on me, but I can't tell the reason why."

"Hush! Mina, and let grandmother tell her story—you always talk so much," said little Mitty, who sat on the other side of her venerable relative.

The old lady patted with one hand the golden head of the chider, but the arm clasped by the magic bracelet was still imprisoned by my fingers, and as she proceeded in its history, my grasp tightened and tightened from the intenseness of my interest, till she was compelled to beg me to release her.

"Yes," said she, in a musing tone, "there is a story depending on this, which I remember as vividly as if the events were of yesterday. I may forget what happened an hour ago, but the records of my youth are written in lines that grow deeper as time flows over them."

She looked up steadily for a few moments, appearing to my imagination like an inspired sybil, then began as follows:

"When I was a young girl, I had no brothers or sisters, as you have, but was an only, I might say a lonely child, for my father was dead and my mother an invalid. When I returned from school, I obtained permission to invite a sweet young cousin of mine, whose name was Eglantine, to be my companion. We were affluent, she was poor; and when my mother proposed to make our house her home, she accepted the offer with gratitude and joy. She was an interesting creature, of a peculiar temperament and exquisite sensibility. She was subject to fits of wonderful buoyancy and equal despondency; sometimes she would warble all day, gay and untiring as the bird, perched on yonder spray, then a soft melancholy would sit brooding on her brow, as if she feared some impending misfortune. This was probably owing to the peculiar circumstances of her infancy, for she was born during her mother's widowhood, and nursed by a mother's tears. A poetical friend had given her the name of Eglantine, and well did her beauty, sweetness, delicacy, and fragility justify the name. In our girlhood we grew together, like the friends of the *Midsummer's Night*, almost inseparable in body, and never divided in heart, by those little jealousies which sometimes interpose their barriers to young

maiden's friendships. But I see little Mitty has fallen asleep already. My story is too grave for the light ears of childhood. I shall be obliged too to say something about love, and even you, Mina, are entirely too young to know any thing of its influence."

"Oh! but I do know something, grandmother," exclaimed I, impulsively; "that is, I have read—I have thought!"—I stammered and stopped, unable to express my own vague ideas.

"You may not be too young to sympathize, but certainly too young to feel," said my grandmother, mildly; "but, ardent and sympathizing as your nature is, it will be hard for you to carry back your mind to the time when all the warm passions and hopes of youth were glowing in my bosom. It is enough to say that there was one who came and rivalled Eglantine in my affections, one to whom I was betrothed, and to whom I was to be shortly wedded. It was on such an eve as this, so clear and bright, that he gave me the pledge of our betrothal, this bracelet of pearl, and clasped it on an arm which then filled the golden circlet. Perhaps, you wonder that the first token of love should not have been a ring; but Ronald did not like to follow the track of other men, and even in trifles marked out for himself a peculiar and independent course. That night, when I retired to my chamber, I found Eglantine seated at the open window, apparently absorbed in the contemplation of the starry heavens. She sat in a loose undress, her hair of paly gold hung unbound over her shoulders, and her head being slightly thrown back, allowed the moonlight to flood her whole face, with its unearthly radiance.

"'You look very beautiful and romantic, dear Eglantine,' said I, softly approaching her, and throwing my arms round her neck, 'but come down from the stars a little while, my sweet cousin, and share in my earthborn emotions.' My heart was too full of happiness, my spirits too excited, not to overflow in unreserved confidence in her bosom. She wept as I poured into her ears all my hopes, my recent vows and future schemes of felicity. It was her usual manner of expressing deep sympathy, and I loved her the better for her tears. 'All I wonder at and blame in Ronald, is,' and I spoke this in true sincerity, 'that he does not love you better than me. Never till this evening was I sure of his preference.'

"Eglantine withdrew herself from my arms, and turned her face to the shadow of the wall. There was something inexplicable in her manner, that chilled, and even alarmed me. A thought too painful to be admitted darted for a moment to my mind. Could she be jealous of Ronald's love for me? Was my happiness to be built on the ruin of hers? No! it could not be. She probably feared my affections might become alienated from her in consequence of my new attachment. Such a fear was natural, and I hastened to remove it by the warmest professions, mingled with covert reproaches for her doubts and misgivings.

"I had a young waiting-maid, who, next to Eg-

lantine was the especial object of my regard. She was the daughter of a gentlewoman, who, from a series of misfortunes, was reduced to penury, to which was added the helplessness of disease. To relieve her mother from the pressure of immediate want, the young Alice offered herself as a candidate for a state of servitude, and I eagerly availed myself of the opportunity of securing the personal attendance of one so refined in manner, and so winning in appearance. Alice now came forward, as was her custom, to assist me in preparing for my nightly rest. She was about to unclasp the bracelet from my wrist, but I drew back my arm. 'No, no, Alice,' said I, 'this is an amulet. Sweet dreams will come to my pillow, beckoned by its fairy power. I cannot sleep without it. See how beautifully the lilies gleam in the moonlight that gilds my couch.' Alice seemed as if she could never weary in admiring the beauty of the ornament. She turned my arm to shift the rays, and catch the delicate colouring of the pearls, and looped up the sleeve of my night-dress in a fantastic manner, to display it fully to her gaze. Once or twice I thought I saw the eyes of Eglantine fastened upon it, with a sad, wistful expression, and the same exquisitely painful thought again darted to my mind. I struggled against its admission, as degrading both to myself and her, and at last fell asleep, with my arm thrown on the outside of the bed, and the bracelet shining out in the pure night-beams. Alice slept in a little bed by the side of mine, for I could not bear that a creature so young and delicate, and so gentle-bred, should share the apartments devoted to the servants, and be exposed to their rude companionship. She generally awoke me with her light touch or gentle voice, but when I awoke the next morning, I saw Alice still sleeping, with a flushed cheek and an attitude that betokened excitement and unrest. Eglantine sat at her window, reading, dressed with her usual care, by her own graceful fingers. In the school of early poverty, she had learned the glorious lesson of independence, a lesson which, in my more luxurious life, I had never acquired. 'Alice must be ill,' said I, rising and approaching her bedside, 'she looks feverish. and her brows are knit, as if her dreams were fearful.' I bent down over her, and laid my hand upon her shoulder, to rouse her from her uneasy slumbers, when I started, for the precious bracelet was gone. Eglantine laid down her book at my sudden exclamation, and Alice waking, looked round her with a bewildered expression. 'My bracelet!' repeated I—'it is gone.' I flew to my couch, it was not there. I looked upon the carpet, in the vain hope that the clasp had unloosed, and that it had fallen during the night. 'Alice,' cried I, 'rise this moment, and help me to find my bracelet. You must know where it is. It never could have vanished without aid.' I fixed my eyes steadfastly on her face, which turned as hueless as marble. She trembled in every limb, and sunk down again on the side of the bed.

"'You do not think I have taken it, Miss Laura,' said she, gasping for breath.

"I do not know what to think," I answered, in a raised tone; 'but it is very mysterious, and your whole appearance and manner is very strange this morning, Alice. You must have been up in the night, or you would not have slept so unusually late'—

"Do not be hasty, Laura," said Eglantine, in a sweet, soothing voice, 'it may yet be found. Perhaps it is clinging to your dress, concealed in its folds. Let me assist you in searching.' She unfolded the sheets, turned up the edges of the carpet, examined every corner where it might have been tossed, but all in vain. In the meanwhile, Alice remained like one stupefied, following our movements with a pale, terrified countenance, without offering to participate in the search.

"There is no use in looking longer, Eglantine," said I, bitterly. 'I suspect Alice might assist us effectually to discover it, if she would. Nay, I will not say suspect, I believe—I dare to say, I know—for conscious guilt is written in glaring characters on her countenance.'

"Do not make any rash accusations, Laura," cried Eglantine; 'I acknowledge appearances are much against her, but I cannot think Alice capable of such ingratitude, duplicity, and meanness.'

Alice here burst into a passionate fit of weeping, and declared, with wringing hands and choking sobs, that she would sooner die than commit so base and wicked a deed.

"Oh! Miss Eglantine," she exclaimed, 'didn't you take it in sport? It seems as if I saw you in a dream, going up to Miss Laura, while she was asleep, and take it from her wrist, softly, and then vanish away. Oh! Miss Eglantine, the more I think of it, the more I am sure I saw you, all in sport I know; but please return it, or it will be death to me.'

"The blood seemed to boil up in the cheeks of Eglantine, so sudden and intense was the glow that mantled them.

"I thought you innocent, Alice," said she, 'but I see, with pain, that you are an unprincipled girl. How dare you attempt to impose on me the burthen of your crime? How dare you think of sheltering yourself under the shadow of my name?'

"The vague suspicions which the assertion of Alice had excited, vanished before the outraged looks and language of the usually gentle Eglantine. Alice must have been the transgressor, and in proportion to the affection and confidence I had reposed in her, and the transcendent value of the gift, was my indignation at the offence, and the strength of my resolution to banish her from me.

"Restore it," said I, 'and leave me. Do it quietly and immediately and I will inflict no other punishment than your own reflections for having abused so much love and trust.'

"Search me, if you please, Miss Laura, and all that belongs to me," replied Alice, in a firmer tone, 'I but I cannot give back what I have never taken. I would not for fifty thousand worlds take what was not mine, and least of all from you, who have been

so kind and good. I am willing to go, for I would rather beg my bread from door to door, than live upon the bounty of one who thinks me capable of such guilt:' with a composure that strangely contrasted with her late violent agitation, she arranged her dress, and was walking towards the door, when Eglantine arrested her.

"Alice, Alice, you must be mad to persist in this course. Confess the whole, return the bracelet, and Laura may yet forgive you. Think of your sick mother. How can you go to her in shame and disgrace?'

"At the mention of her mother, Alice wept afresh, and putting her hand to her head, exclaimed,

"I feel very, very sick. Perhaps we shall die together, and then God will take pity on us. The great God knows I am innocent of this crime.'

"Grandmother," interrupted I, unable to keep silence any longer, "tell me if she was not innocent. I know she must have been. Who could have taken it?'

"Do you think Eglantine more likely to have stolen it from her cousin, who was to her, as it were, another soul and being?'

"Oh! no," I replied, "but I shall feel unhappy till I discover the thief. Please, grandmother, go on. Did Alice really go away?'

"Yes, my child," answered my grandmother, in a faltering voice, "she went, though my relenting heart pleaded for her to linger. Her extreme youth and helplessness, her previous simplicity and truthfulness, and her solemn asseverations of innocence, all staggered my belief in her guilt. It was a mystery which grew darker as I attempted to penetrate it. If Alice were innocent, who could be guilty. Eglantine? Such a thought was sacrilege to her pure and elevated character, her tried affection for me, her self-respect, dignity, and truth. Alice returned to her mother, in spite of our permission for her to remain till the subject could be more fully investigated.

"When the door closed upon her retreating form, I sat down by the side of Eglantine, and wept. The fear that I had unjustly accused the innocent, the possibility, nay the probability that she was guilty, the loss of the first pledge of plighted love, indefinite terrors for the future, a dim shade of superstition brooding over the whole, all conspired to make me gloomy and desponding. We were all unhappy. Ronald tried to laugh at my sadness, and promised me 'gems from the mine, and pearls from the ocean,' to indemnify me for my loss, yet I watched every change of his expressive countenance, and I knew he thought deeply and painfully on the subject. The strange suspicion which had risen in my mind the preceding night, with regard to Eglantine's feelings towards him, revived when I saw them together, and I wondered I had not observed before the fluctuations of her complexion, and the agitation of her manner, whenever he addressed her. He had always treated her with the kindness of a brother—that kindness now made me unhappy. I was becoming suspicious, jealous, and

self-distrustful, with a settled conviction that some strange barrier existed to my union with Ronald, a destiny too bright, and too beautiful, to be realized in this world of dreams and shadows. My mother was firm in her belief of the guilt of Alice, who had never been a favourite of hers. Perhaps, I lavished upon her too many indulgences, which displeased my mother's soberer judgment. She forbade all intercourse with her, all mention of her name, but she was ever present to my imagination, sometimes the shameless ingrate and accomplished deceiver; at others, the eloquent pleader of her outraged innocence. One day Eglantine came to me, and laid her hand on mine, with a look of unspeakable dismay.

"'I have heard,' said she, 'that Alice is dying. Let us go to her, Laura, and save her, if it be not too late.'

"What I felt at hearing these words, I never can tell,—they pressed upon me with such a weight of grief—her innocence seemed as clear to me as noon-day—my own unkindness as cruel as the grave. Quickly as possible we sought the cottage where her mother dwelt, and a piteous spectacle met our eyes. There lay Alice on a little bed, pale, emaciated, and almost unconscious, her once bright hair, dim and matted, her sweet blue eyes sunk and half closed, her arms laid listlessly by her side, the breath coming faint and flutteringly from her parted lips. On another bed lay her poor, heart-broken mother, unable to relieve the sufferings of her she would gladly have died to save. Frantic with grief I threw myself by the side of Alice, and disturbed the solemn stillness of the death-hour with my incoherent ravings. I declared her innocence, I called upon her to live, to live for my sake, and throwing my arms wildly round her wasted form, struggled to hold her back from the grave, yawning beneath her. It was in vain to cope with Omnipotence. Alice died, even in the midst of my agonies, and it was long before I was able to listen to the story of her illness, as related by her disconsolate mother. She had returned home sick and feverish, and sick and feverish she evidently was on her first awakening, and that wounded spirit, which none can bear, acting on a diseased frame, accelerated the progress of her fever, till it settled on her brain, producing delirium and ultimately death. During all her delirium, she was pleading her cause, with an angel's eloquence, declaring her innocence and blessing me as her benefactress and friend."

Here my grandmother paused and covered her eyes with her handkerchief. I laid my head on her lap, and the ringlets of little Mitty's hair were wet with my tears. I felt quite broken-hearted, and ready to murmur at Providence for placing me in a world so full of error and woes.

"Did you ever feel happy again, dear grandmother?" asked I, when I ventured to break the silence,—curiosity was completely merged in sympathy.

"Yes, Mina, I have had hours of happiness, such as seldom falls to the lot of woman, but those bright

hours were like the shining of the gold, that comes forth purified from the furnace of fire. The mother of Alice soon followed her to the grave, and there they sleep, side by side, in the lonely churchyard. Eglantine soothed and comforted me, and endeavoured to stifle the self-upbraidings that ever sounded dolefully to my heart. Alice had been the victim of inexplicable circumstances, and so far from having been cruel, I had been kind and forbearing, considering the weight of evidence against her. Thus reasoned Eglantine, and I tried to believe her, but all my hopes of joy seemed blighted, for how could I mingle the wreath of love with the cypress boughs that now darkened my path? Ronald pressed an immediate union, but I shrunk with superstitious dread from the proposition, and refused the ring, with which he now sought to bind my faith. 'No, no,' I cried, 'the pledges of love are not for me—I will never accept another.'

"My mother grew angry at my fatalism. 'You are nursing phantasies,' said she, 'that are destroying the brightness of your youth. You are actually making yourself old, ere yet in your bloom. See, if there are not actually streaks of gray threading your jetty hair.' I rose and stood before a mirror, and shaking my hair loose from the confining comb, saw that her words were true. Here and there a gleam of silver wandered through those tresses, which had always worn that purple depth of hue peculiar to the raven's plumage. The chill that penetrated my heart on the death-bed of Alice, had thus suddenly and prematurely frosted the dark locks of my youth. My mother became alarmed at my excessive paleness, and proposed a journey for the restoration of my spirits and health. Ronald eagerly supported the suggestion, but Eglantine declined accompanying us. She preferred, she said, being alone. With books at home, and nature, in the glory of its summer garniture abroad, she could not want sources of enjoyment. I did not regret her determination, for her presence had become strangely oppressive to me, and even Ronald's manners had assumed an embarrassment and constraint towards her, very different from their usual familiarity. The night before our departure, I felt more melancholy than ever. It was just such a night as the one that witnessed our ill-starred betrothal. The moon came forth from behind a bed of white clouds, silvering every flake as it floated back from her beauteous face, and diffusing on earth the wondrous secret of heavenly communion. I could not sleep, and as I lay gazing on the solemn tranquillity of the night heavens, I thought of the time when 'those heavens should be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements melt with fervent heat,' and I, still thinking, living, feeling in other, grander, everlasting scenes, the invisible dweller of my bosom's temple assumed such magnitude and majesty in my eyes, the contemplation became overwhelming and awful. The sublime sound of the clock striking the midnight hour—and all who have heard that sound in the dead silence of the night, can attest that it is sublime—broke in on my deep abstraction. Eglantine

time, who had lain wrapt in peaceful slumbers, here softly drew back the bed-cover, and rising slowly, walked round with stilly steps to the side where I reclined, and stood looking fixedly upon me. 'Eglantine!' I exclaimed, terrified at her attitude and singular appearance. 'Eglantine, what is the matter?' She answered not, moved not, but remained standing, immovable, with her eyes fixed and expressionless as stone. There she stood in the white moonlight, in her long, loose night-dress, which hung around her, in her stillness, like the folds of the winding sheet, her hair streaming down her back in long, lifeless tresses, and lighted up on her brow with a kind of supernatural radiance—and then those death resembling eyes! I trembled and tried to draw the sheet over my face, to shut out the appalling vision. After a few moments, which seemed interminable to me, she bent over me, and taking my right hand, felt of my wrist, again and again. Her fingers were as cold as marble. My very blood seemed to congeal under her touch. 'It is gone,' murmured she, 'but it is safe—I have it safe. It fits my wrist as well as hers.' Terrified as I was at this unexpected apparition, my mind was clear and never were my perceptions more vivid. The mystery of the bracelet was about to be unravelled. Poor Alice's assertion that she had seen Eglantine standing by my side, and taking the bracelet from my wrist, came back thundering in my ears. 'It is gone,' replied Eglantine, in the same low, deep voice, 'but I know where it is laid; where the bridegroom or the bride can never find it. Perhaps the moon shines too brightly on it, and reveals the spot.' Thus saying, she glided across the floor, with spirit-like tread, and opening the door, disappeared. In the excess of my excitement I forgot my fears, and hastily rising, followed her footsteps, determined to unravel the mystery, if I died in the act. I could catch the glimpses of her white garments, through the shadows of the winding staircase, and I pursued them with rapid steps, till I found myself close behind her by the door which opened into the garden. There she stood, still as a corpse, and again the cold dew of superstitious terror gathered on my brow. I soon saw a fumbling motion about the keyhole, and the door opening, she again glided onward towards the summer-house, my favourite retreat, the place where I had received this mysterious bracelet—the place where Flora had collected all her wealth of bloom. She put aside the drooping vines, sending out such a cloud of fragrance on the dewy air, I almost fainted from their oppression, and stooping down over a white rose-bush, carefully removed the lower branches, while the rose-leaves fell in a snowy shower over her naked feet. 'Where is it?' said she, feeling about in the long grass. 'It isn't in the spot where I hid it. If she has found it, she may yet be a bride, and Ronald still her own.' She stooped down lower over the rose-bush, then rising hastily, I saw with inexpressible agitation, the lost bracelet, shining in the light that quivered with ghostlike lustre on her pallid face. With a

most unearthly smile, she clasped it on her wrist, and left the arbour, muttering in a low voice, 'I will not leave it here—lest she find out where it lies and win back her bridal gift. I will keep it next my own heart, and she cannot reach it there.' Once more I followed the gliding steps of Eglantine, through the chill silence of night, till we ascended the stairs and entered our own chamber. Quietly she laid herself down, as if she had just risen from her knees in prayer, and I perceived by her closed lids and gentle breathing, that a natural sleep was succeeding the inexplicable mysteries of somnambulism."

"She was walking in her sleep, then, grandmother," I exclaimed, drawing a long breath. "I thought so all the time, and poor Alice was really innocent! And what did Eglantine say, the next morning, when she awakened, and found the bracelet on her arm?"

"She was astonished and bewildered, and knew not what to think; but when I told her of all the events of the night, the truth of which the bracelet itself attested, she sunk back like one stricken with death. So many thoughts crowded upon her at once, in such force, it is no wonder they almost crushed her with their power. The conviction that her love for Ronald could no longer be concealed, the remembrance of the accusation of Alice, which she had so indignantly repelled, the apparent meanness and turpitude of the act, though performed without any conscious volition on her part, the belief that another had been the victim of her involuntary crime, all united to bow her spirit to the dust. My heart bled at the sight of her distress, and every feeling wrought up to unnatural strength by the exciting scenes I had witnessed, I promised never to wed Ronald, since the thought of our union had evidently made her so unhappy. Eglantine contended against this resolution with all her eloquence, but alas! she was not destined long to oppose the claims of friendship to the pleadings of love. Her constitution was naturally frail, a fragility indicated by the extreme delicacy and mutability of her complexion, and the profusion of her pale golden hair. Day by day, she faded, night by night she continued her mysterious rambles to the spot where she had first deposited the bracelet, till she had no longer strength to leave her bed, when her soul seemed to commune with the cherubim and seraphim, which, I doubt not, in their invisible glory, surrounded her nightly couch. As she drew near the land of shadows, she lost sight of the phantom of earthly love, in aspirations after a heavenly union. She mourned over her ill-directed sensibilities, her wasted opportunities, her selfish brooding over forbidden hopes and imaginings. She gave herself up in penitence and faith to her Redeemer, in submission to her Father and her God, and her soul at last passed away as silently and gently as the perfume from the evening flower, into the bosom of eternity."

"Oh! grandmother, what a melancholy story you have told," cried I, looking at the bracelet more

intently than ever, the vivid feelings of curiosity subdued and chastened by such sad revealings; "but did not you marry Ronald at last?"

"Yes," replied she, looking upward with mournful earnestness, "the beloved grandfather, who has so often dandled you in his arms, in this very spot, where we are now seated, whose head, white with the snows of threescore years and ten, now reposes on the pillow all the living must press,—who now waits me, I trust, in the dwellings of immortality, was that once youthful Ronald, whose beauty and worth captivated the affections of the too sensitive Eglantine. Many, many years of happiness has it been my blessed lot to share with him on earth. The memories of Alice and Eglantine, softened by time, were robbed of their bitterness, and only served to endear us more tenderly to each other. The knowledge we had gained of the frailty and

uncertainty of life, led us to lift our views to a more enduring state of existence, and love hallowed by religion, became a sublime and holy bond, imperishable as the soul and lofty as its destinies. I have lived to see my children's children gather around me, like the olive branches of scripture, fair and flourishing. I have lived to see the companion of my youth and age consigned to the darkness of the grave, and I have nothing more to do on earth, but to fold the mantle of the spirit quietly around me, and wait the coming of the Son of Man."

I looked up with reverence in my grandmother's face, as she thus concluded the eventful history of the Pearl Bracelet, and I thought what a solemn and beautiful thing was old age, when the rays of the Sun of Righteousness thus illumed its hoary hair, and converted it into an emblematic crown of glory.

## PAUL AND VIRGINIA.

(See Plate.)

THOSE who have read this charming work, (Paul and Virginia) will need no explanation of the scene portrayed. They will immediately recognize the two lovely children returning from the Blank river, whither they had gone to intercede for the forgiveness of a poor fugitive slave, whom they persuaded to return to her master, a rich planter of the Island. For the gratification of our young readers, who may not have had the pleasure of perusing the book, we will give the description in the inimitable manner it is told by St. Pierre.

"They climbed up the precipice they had descended, and having gained the summit, seated themselves at the foot of a tree, overcome with fatigue, hunger and thirst. They had left their cottage fasting, and walked five leagues since break of day. Paul said to Virginia—'My dear sister, it is just noon, and I am sure you are hungry and thirsty;—we shall find no dinner here; let us go down the mountain again, and ask the master of the poor slave for some food.'

"Oh, no!" answered Virginia—"he frightens me too much. Remember what mamma sometimes says—'The bread of the wicked is like stones in the mouth.'"

"What shall we do then?" said Paul—"these trees produce no fruit; and I shall not be able to find even a tamarind or lemon to refresh you."

"Scarcely had he pronounced these words when they heard the dashing of waters which fell from a neighbouring rock. They ran thither, and having quenched their thirst at this crystal spring, they gathered a few cresses which grew on the borders

of the stream. While they were wandering in the woods in search of more solid nourishment, Virginia descried a young palm tree. The kind of cabbage which is found at the top of this tree, enfolded within the leaves, forms an excellent sustenance; but although the stalk or trunk of this tree was not thicker than a man's leg, it was above sixty feet in height. The wood of this tree is composed of fine filaments, but the bark is so hard that it turns the edge of the hatchet, and Paul had not even a knife. At length he thought of setting fire to the palm tree; but a new difficulty occurred, he had no steel with which to strike fire; and though the whole Island (Mauritius or the Isle of France) is covered with rocks, not a flint is to be found. Necessity, however, is fertile in expedients, and the most useful inventions have arisen from men placed in the most destitute situations. Paul determined to kindle a fire in the manner he had seen practised by the negroes. With the sharp end of a stone he made an incision in the branch of a tree that was quite dry, which he held between his feet. He then sharpened another dry branch of a different sort of wood, and then placing the sharp point in the hole of the branch under his feet, he commenced turning it rapidly between his hands; in a few seconds smoke and sparks of fire issued from the point of contact. Paul then heaped together dry leaves and branches, and soon set fire to the palm tree, which burned and fell to the ground. The fire was useful to him in stripping off the long thick leaves which enclosed the cabbage.

"After these children had refreshed themselves

with this simple food, which they greatly enjoyed, because they were thinking and talking of the good which they hoped they had done for the poor slave, still the idea of their mothers, and the uneasiness they must feel at their long absence, would intrude. Virginia often recurred to the subject, but Paul, who felt his strength renewed by their meal, assured her that it would not be long before they reached home. 'The sun,' said he, 'shines full upon our cottages at noon. We must pass, as we did this morning, over that mountain with its three points, which you see yonder. Come, let us go.' "

\* \* \* \* \*

"They walked on slowly through the woods, but from the height of the trees, and the thickness of their foliage, they soon lost sight of the mountain with the three peaks, by which they had directed their course, and even of the sun, which was now setting. At length they wandered, without perceiving it, into a labyrinth of rocks and trees, which appeared to have no opening. Paul made Virginia sit down, while he ran backwards and forwards half frantic, in search of some path which might lead them out of the thick wood; but all his researches were vain, and he began to weep.

" 'Do not weep, my dear brother,' said Virginia, 'or I shall die of grief. I am the cause of all your sorrow, and of all that our mothers suffer at this moment. I find we ought to do nothing, not even what we think is good, without consulting our parents. Oh! I have been very imprudent,' and she burst into tears. But in a moment she raised her head, and said to Paul—'Let us pray to God, my dear brother, and he will hear us.'

"Scarcely had they finished their prayer when they heard the barking of a dog. 'It is the dog of some hunter,' said Paul, 'who comes at night to lay in wait for the stags.'

"Soon after the dog barked again, with more violence. 'Surely,' said Virginia, 'it is Fidele, our own Fidele. Yes, I know his voice. We are at the foot of our own mountain! We are near home.'

"A moment after, and Fidele was at their feet, barking, howling and crying, and devouring them with caresses. Before they had recovered from their surprise they saw Domingo, their old faithful negro servant, running towards them! Oh! what joy was this."



## THE AWAKENED HEART.

BY MRS. EMMA C. EMBURY.

My schoolmate, Lizzie L., was one of those gay, thoughtless, light-hearted beings, whom every body likes, but who rarely awaken a deep and abiding interest in one's heart. Before we can truly love our companions we must have wept as well as laughed with them, they must have called forth the hidden sympathies of our nature; we must share their sorrows no less than their joys, and this is as true in childhood as in later life. Now, Lizzie's heart was always so full of joyousness, that those of a less gladsome temper were often oppressed and overpowered by her gaiety. Her susceptibility to outward impressions was so great, that it gave her the semblance not only of fickleness, but even of insincerity; and they who sounded the depths and shallows of her girlish character found no anchorage ground for their faith. Her parents had died when she was little more than an infant, and Lizzie would have been thrown upon the cold charity of the world, had it not been for the kindness of a gentleman who had been her father's bosom friend from boyhood. He took the child to his home, and placing her under the charge of a sister, who presided over his bachelor household; avowed his determination to protect and provide for the orphan. Had Lizzie been older when these circumstances occurred, a sense of gratitude might have given more depth to her feelings, but the effect *now* was rather an injurious one, since it exonerated her from those claims of tenderness which naturally spring up in the relation between parent and child. She had no ties of blood to any living creature, and as the unbroken prosperity of her benefactors deprived her of all opportunity of making those daily self-sacrifices which, under other circumstances, her gratitude might have suggested, she grew up towards womanhood without having one deep emotion awakened in her bosom. Gentle, sweet-tempered and joyous, she yet seemed totally deficient in the power of earnest feeling. She resembled one of those beautiful Chinese drawings, where bird and flower and butterfly are delicately drawn and exquisitely coloured, but where the total absence of all shadows so fatigues the eye, that it gladly turns to some less resplendent and more softly-tinted picture.

After leaving school I lost sight of Lizzie for about two years, when I met her at a fashionable watering-place, attended by her guardian and his sister. Mr. Weldon was one of those well-preserved specimens of manly beauty, which seem to defy all attempts at "*verifying dates*." A stranger might have thought him somewhere about five-and-thirty, while those who remembered his face about town for

the last twenty years, knew that he must be much older. Yet the absence of all those daily cares which wear so much upon the physical frame, had enabled him to retain much of his youthfulness of appearance, while a judicious use of the convenient appliances of art, enabled him to supply the ravages of time. He was handsome in person, grave and dignified in manners, affluent in his circumstances, liberal and good-natured in disposition, and remarkable for nothing so much as his tendency to abstract speculations, and his fondness for books, which he devoured with a voracity that effectually prevented all healthy digestion of their contents. Naturally studious in his habits, his large patrimony had left him without a motive for active exertion; and his veneration for true genius led him to despise the temporary reputation of popular authorship. He had, therefore, given himself up to the pleasures of literary idleness, and contented himself with enjoying the fruits of other men's labour, without putting forth his hand to scatter the seed which might have grown up into a stately tree, for the overshadowing of some future wayfarer in the rugged path of learning.

His sister, Miss Weldon, was a real old-school spinster. Tall, thin, and as upright as if her back had never been allowed to repose its perpendicularity during the last half century, with a face of most decided ugliness, but full of benevolent expression, she was as rigid and unbending in character as she seemed in person. Extremely exacting in small matters, but remarkably liberal in all important ones, she would reprimand a servant with excessive severity for neglecting to brush away a cobweb, while she would exercise the utmost charity towards a moral failing. In short, she was one of those persons who so often shock our instinctive sense of justice, that their opinions become at length of little importance, and their influence is rather injurious than beneficial to those of more impulsive character.

Lizzie had grown up very beautiful, but her infantile expression of countenance had gained no shadow from the impending duties of womanhood; and it was easy to perceive that the light-heartedness which characterized her early days, was still her prevailing trait. Her cheek was as round and rosy, her lip as bright, her blue eyes as full of mirth as in childhood; but her golden hair had a tinge of deeper brown upon its rich curls, her brows were darker and more firmly pencilled, and the long black lashes which fringed her laughing eyes, gave a new and pleasing softness to their expression. Her extreme beauty attracted around her all those butterflies of fashion, who flutter their brief season

in the sunshine of gay life; and the wealth of him whom the world considered her father by adoption, gave new zest to the admiration which her loveliness excited. I thought, however, that I could perceive something like disquiet in the watchfulness with which Mr. Weldon regarded Lizzie and her admirers. Indeed, the evident annoyance which he once or twice displayed, when her sylph-like form was whirled through the mazes of a waltz, in the arms of a tall, black-whiskered beau, convinced me that there was something more than paternal fondness in his prudent care of her.

I was little surprised, therefore, when, in the course of the following winter, I received an invitation to attend the nuptials of Mr. Weldon and his beautiful ward. Lizzie was certainly one of the loveliest of brides, and though she looked rather like the daughter than the wife of him to whom she plighted her faith, yet there was a gentle reverence in her manner towards him, which seemed to promise more happiness than usually results from such unequal marriages. The truth was, that Mr. Weldon, early in life, had met with one of those disappointments, which often freeze for ever the deepest fountain of affection. He could never again love with the fervour which had characterized his first attachment, but he was kindly and affectionate in his disposition, and his regard for Lizzie, while it was almost paternal in its character, yet derived something of earnestness from the absence of all ties of actual kindred between them. He saw that her position in society was a dangerous one, and mingled with his disinterested wish for her future welfare, was a natural emotion of jealousy towards those who aspired to her favour. He finally persuaded himself that Lizzie's happiness could be best promoted by a continuance of the guardianship which had watched over her childhood; and, after sundry serious deliberations with his sister, it was finally decided that he should make Lizzie his wife. It is true he was thirty years her senior, but this disparity only made him a safer guide for her inexperience, and the subject was at length referred to Lizzie; but less in the form of a *proposition* than as the final arrangement of a long settled project. Lizzie was somewhat startled at the first development of this scheme. She reflected upon it gravely for at least an hour—a long time in Lizzie's calendar of thoughtfulness—and finally, having come to the conclusion that it was a duty which her benefactors seemed to expect of her, that Mr. Weldon was one of the handsomest men she knew, even if he was not very young, and that she really liked him better than any one else in the world—she avowed her consent to the marriage.

Like all persons, in whom a strong sense of inner life has never been developed, Lizzie was keenly alive to all the pleasurable excitements of external circumstances. In compliance with her wishes, Mr. Weldon purchased a new house, furnished it in the most luxurious manner, and, installing his sister in her wonted dignity as housekeeper, commenced a style of living as different as possible from his former

plain habits. Lizzie was just like a petted and indulged child; she caressed and coaxed her husband with so much girlish grace and sweetness that he never could refuse any request however unreasonable it might seem to his better judgment. Her good temper enabled her to yield so easily and so becomingly in all small matters, that she was always sure to have her way in every thing which seemed to contribute to her real gratification, and she was thus enabled to indulge her taste for gaiety and expense, without in the least degree impairing the harmony of her pleasant home. Proud of his beautiful wife, pleased with the respect and deference with which she always treated him, confiding implicitly in her really good principles, and conscious that her affections never wandered from her duties, Mr. Weldon found his highest pleasure in anticipating her every wish. His sister sometimes remonstrated and reproved, but her opinions had but little weight, and Lizzie was allowed to acquire habits which were only fitted for a life of self-indulgence; while her years fled by without affording her the experience which the ordinary chances and changes of time bring to all.

I saw but little of Lizzie during this period, for the dissipation in which she lived, did not harmonize with the quiet in which my heart found happiness. I heard continually of Mrs. Weldon's splendid parties, of her costly equipages, of her extravagance in dress, of her brilliant success in society, and of the singular attachment which subsisted between the young wife and her elderly husband, undisturbed as it seemed by all the allurements of society, on the one side, and the increasing distaste to gay life on the other. But a few years passed away, and all was changed. Mr. Weldon died suddenly, and a will, which bequeathed his fine fortune to be equally divided between his wife and sister, was found in his desk, *without signature*. Miss Weldon, however, produced a will of much earlier date, legally executed several years previous to his marriage, which gave to his sister his whole estate, and Lizzie now found herself totally unprovided for. Upon further investigation, it was found that there had been an understanding, many years previous, between the brother and sister, respecting the disposition of the estate; and that each had executed a will which secured to the survivor the whole amount of their large and undivided patrimony. The manifest injustice of such a will, after his marriage, had suggested itself to Mr. Weldon, and he had intended to satisfy his conscience by an equal division, but he had deferred the fulfilment of his design until death came to set his seal upon that which was already done.

When I heard of Lizzie's misfortunes, all my former interest in her was renewed, and I was among the first who visited her in her seclusion. I found her looking very lovely in her grief, for she retained at five-and-twenty, much of the fresh beauty which had characterized her at fifteen; and, as her sweet young face looked out from beneath the heavy and ungraceful widow's cap, she seemed

to be enacting some piquant part in a masquerade. But she did grieve heartily and truly for her kind husband, and her total ignorance of the want and value of money, led her to pay little attention, as yet, to the provisions of his unjust will. I could not but lament the fate of one who had lived in an atmosphere of luxury until, it seemed to me, she was unfitted for any other; and, when I saw her total unconsciousness of the unfortunate predicament in which she was placed, I could not but deprecate the injudicious indulgence which had left her now with a character but half formed, and a mind but half developed, to struggle with the exigencies of life. But, Miss Weldon, touched by Lizzie's genuine sorrow for the dead, and her apparent indifference to the change in her fortunes, determined to fulfil, in part, the evident wish of her brother. With a cautious degree of liberality, which certainly did credit to her prudence, she proposed to continue their splendid establishment, on the same scale of magnificence, and offered to share with Lizzie the income derived from Mr. Weldon's estate; thus making the widow seemingly independent, while, in fact, all the luxuries which use had now made necessary to her comfort were held only at the good will and pleasure of the spinster. This mockery of wealth might have been rejected by a more sensitive mind, but Lizzie had never felt any very delicate scruples on the subject of self-indulgence, and knowing that her husband would have wished her to continue the companion of his sister, she seemed quite content to accept Miss Weldon's offer. Indeed she possessed too generous and liberal a spirit to feel that there was any dependence in her position, for she never dreamed that Miss Weldon could feel she was conferring, as an obligation, what her sense of justice must have dictated to her as a duty. So Lizzie continued to indulge her habits of idleness and luxury without a single fear for the future. The protracted morning slumber, the late breakfast served in her dressing-room, the perfumed bath, the attendance of a well-trained dressing-maid at her toilet, and all the thousand wants and whims which unlimited wealth and the command of a train of obsequious servants could create, were still allowed to fill up the measure of her days.

Among my few tried and valued friends of the opposite sex, was one who afforded a living proof of the doctrine of compensations; since Heaven, in denying him all the appliances of fortune, had bestowed upon him every thing most desirable in the human character. Frank F—— possessed the richest gifts of a commanding and powerful intellect, his brilliant imagination, his sparkling wit, his fervid fancy, his clear judgment, his correct taste, were equally exhibited in his writings and in his daily conversation; while his fine genial qualities, his kindness of heart, his warm affections, his tenderness of nature, and his susceptibility to all generous impulses, made him one of the most attachable as well as one of the most admirable of men. His person was remarkably fine, his head would have charmed a phrenologist, and his sparkling, vivid,

expressive countenance left one no opportunity of criticising the irregularity of feature which would have marred a less noble face. He had passed the green springtime of youth, but was in the very prime of manhood, and had I been called to depict the character which came nearest to my beau-ideal of the sex, I should have drawn the portrait of my friend Frank.

Such was the person who accidentally met Mrs. Weldon, when, in the third year of her widowhood, she discarded the more ungraceful portion of her weeds, and returned to the gay scenes which she had once adorned. Her long seclusion, and the quiet touch of sorrow, had given a softness to her manners which added new charms to her beauty, and Frank soon became deeply and desperately in love with the gentle widow. I must confess that I was both disappointed and grieved by this untoward chance, for I estimated Frank too much to contemplate with patience his attachment to so frivolous a character. The devotion of such a heart to such an idol seemed to me little better than desecration. But the voice of reason has little influence over the dictates of passion, and though I availed myself of the privilege of long-tried friendship, in my remonstrances against the folly of such an attachment, I found all my arguments of no avail.

"You do not know Mrs. Weldon," said Frank to me, one day, when I had been discoursing at some length of her utter incapacity for loving as he deserved to be loved; "you do not know her, if you believe her to be incapable of strong emotions. There are some hearts, in which, as in the burning soil of a tropical climate, passion-flowers spring up spontaneously, but there are others where are found only the sweet wild-flowers of the gentler affections, until culture brings forth the perfumed blossoms of a sunnier clime. The full strength of Lizzie's womanly nature has never been called forth. The joyousness of temper which to you seems an evidence of frivolity, is but the overflow of a deep and living spring of tenderness which lies unstirred within her bosom."

"And can you believe, Frank, that in all the changes which come over woman's character from childhood to youth—as a maiden, and as a wife—can you believe that those deep affections could still remain hidden, if she really possessed them?"

"Surely, surely," was his earnest reply; "she never knew the strong love which binds a daughter to the mother who watches over her infancy, and to the father who guards her youth; a feeling somewhat filial, but less devoted in its character—a feeling of mingled respect and gratitude—bound her to her husband; the maternal instincts, which in so many hearts supply the place of passionate emotions, have never been awakened in her heart; her duties have all been performed without the need of earnest affections; her character is only half-developed."

"And now, at eight-and-twenty, you expect to discover and bring to light these precious treasures!"

"I do; nay more, I have already succeeded in inspiring emotions such as never before disturbed the calm current of her life."

"And wait till the moment of self-sacrifice comes, and then test the value of that which you deemed fine gold, Frank; if she could relinquish all her selfish indulgences, and adapt herself perfectly and entirely to your fortunes, I might give her credit for some energy of feeling and action; but her position places her above the reach of such a trial, and you will be more likely to be spoiled by the luxury with which your marriage will surround you."

"Good heavens! my dear madam, is it possible you do not know the penalty attached to her union with me? Miss Weldon, upon whom her husband's sudden death left her entirely dependent, has declared that in the event of a second marriage, she shall withdraw the allowance which she has hitherto permitted her to derive from the estate."

"Can it be possible? What then is to be done?"

"For my part, I am glad of it, since it obviates my only objection to wedding the object of my tenderest love. I would not have the world give me credit for a prudential marriage, and when we are united, Lizzie will be as poor as myself."

"And has she consented to be your wife at such a sacrifice?"

"I have a great mind not to satisfy your ungenerous doubts. We are to be married next week."

"But what will you do, Frank, with so perfectly useless a wife?"

"I am going to settle in the West, that Eldorado of all imprudent and unsuccessful people."

I laughed heartily at this wild project. "What! take Lizzie to a log-cabin, and expect her to cook your bacon and knead your bread? Why, Frank, she never rises in the morning till eleven o'clock, and then cannot breakfast except upon French chocolate, served up in Sevres china."

"She will learn better, and be all the happier in the novelty of a different kind of life."

I shook my head with a most knowing expression of doubt and dissatisfaction, and our conversation ended.

A second time I saw Lizzie arrayed as a bride, and if she had lost some of the freshness of her glad youth, I fancied she had gained something more elevated and noble from the daily contemplation of moral excellence in her lover. But, when I looked on Frank, and remembered that he was, now, in the very lowest ebb of fortune, and that he was uniting to his own the destiny of a creature nursed in the lap of luxury, I could have wept at my own melancholy forebodings.

Miss Weldon fulfilled her threat, for her indignation at Lizzie's second marriage knew no bounds, and the gentle widow was a portionless and penniless bride. A few weeks were given to the enjoyment of society, and then the newly wedded pair wended their way to the Far West.

Twelve months had elapsed after their departure, when I was gladdened by a letter from Frank F.

"How you would wonder," he said, "if you could look in upon us now. Lizzie is actually cooking a piece of bacon for my dinner, and its savoury smell mingles with the rich steam of the corn-bread which

she has just placed smoking upon the table. Our house is divided into two apartments—one is our parlour, kitchen, and hall,—the other is our bed-chamber, and Lizzie's taste has contrived to give an air of comfort to the desolate dwelling. Instead of rising at eleven, Lizzie is up with the sun, and her first care is to bring me a cup of soft warm water for my toilet, (for she insists upon my shaving every day, though in this part of the country it is only a weekly luxury.) While I am performing this operation, she prepares our breakfast, and though it is not made of French chocolate, nor drank from any more costly cups than common white delf, yet we enjoy it with an appetite such as only health and happiness can give. I wish you could see how sweet Lizzie looks in her calico dress and clean check-apron. She is a little browned by the sun, and her hands are sadly spoiled, but she is lovelier than ever. I wish you could see her, if it were only to convince you of the truth of my prediction. The fountain of affection has been unsealed, its waters have found a channel broad and deep, and never did man drink from a purer and more refreshing stream."

"Wonders will never cease," said I to myself, as I folded the letter; "Lizzie F—— cooking, baking, waiting upon her lazy husband, wearing check-aprons, and—pshaw, it is nothing but a lover's exaggeration."

By and by another letter brought me tidings of an addition to their happiness. Lizzie was a mother; her baby was a sturdy boy, as pretty as its mother, and with every promise of being as robust as its father. "How will all the baking and boiling go on now," thought I, "with this new claimant upon Lizzie's time?" But there came no murmurs in the frequent letters which I received from both my friends, and I must confess, that the refined and intellectual tone of Lizzie's epistolary communications struck me with surprise. She seemed to have undergone a complete metamorphose, and, excepting in her sunny cheerfulness, I could discern no trace of the light-minded, frivolous, indolent woman of fashion.

Seven years passed away, and then another change came over the fortunes of the twain. Miss Weldon was afflicted with a lingering illness, which, while it brought death to watch beside her pillow, still allowed her time to lay aside her prejudices and animosities. She had no relative to inherit her wealth, and the remembrance of the child whom she had reared from infancy, came to her like gentle vision. She would fain have summoned Lizzie to her sick bed, but it was too late. She did all that she now could, however, and with the new of her death, which I was deputed to convey to my friends, I was enabled also to make them acquainted with their accession to a large and unincumbered property. Of course the log-cabin was speedily abandoned, and among the list of arrivals at the Astor House was soon numbered the name of Frank F——, Esq., and family. I hastened to offer my congratulations, and I hope I may be pardoned if little curiosity to witness time's changes in Lizzie

mingled with my better feelings. But Lizzie was one of those happy creatures whom Love renovates faster than Time can despoil. Her person had acquired a noble fulness, without losing the slightest portion of its grace, and her face was as radiant in its fresh beauty as if she had numbered only weeks instead of years, during the latter half of her life. She showed me her three children, fat, chubby little creatures, full of life and animal spirits, as all healthy children should be, and the pride which sparkled in her eye left me in no doubt as to her maternal feelings. She spoke of her husband with a degree of enthusiasm, which charmed me, and, when he entered, and I saw the bright *heart-beam* which flashed over her face, as she looked upon him, I readily acknowledged in my own soul that Frank had proved a true seer. Love had wrought

out his mighty work,—the beautiful statue had been vivified by his touch, and the heart which had so long slumbered in quiet apathy, now throbbed with the firm, strong, healthful pulsations of self-forgetting and devoted womanly tenderness.

Lizzie still lives in comfort and affluence, the idol of her husband, the beloved of her children, admired and esteemed by all who know her, and affording by her daily life, a beautiful testimonial of Love's magic.

Reader, there are hundreds of women who live and die with energies but half awakened, and characters but half developed. The oracle within their souls is dumb, or only utters those unintelligible words which require the interpretation of the prophet voice of Love or Sorrow ere they can be fully understood.

## THE COUNTESS NYSCHRIEM AND THE HANDSOME ARTIST.

BY N. P. WILLIS.

THAT favoured portion of the light of one summer's morning that was destined to be the transparent bath of the masterpieces on the walls of the Pitti, was pouring in a languishing flood through the massive windows of the palace. The ghosts of the painters (who, ministering to the eye only, walk the world from cock-crowing to sunset) were haunting invisibly the sumptuous rooms made famous by their pictures, and the pictures themselves, conscious of the presence of the fountain of soul from which gushed the soul that is in them, glowed with intoxicated mellowness and splendour, and amazed the living students of the gallery with effects of light and colour till that moment undiscovered.

[And now, dear reader, having paid you the compliment of commencing my story in *your* vein, (poetical,) let me come down to a little every-day brick-and-mortar, and build up a fair and square common-sense foundation.]

Græme McDonald was a young Highlander from Rob Roy's country, come to Florence to study the old masters. He was an athletic, wholesome, handsome fellow, who had probably made a narrow escape of being simply a fine animal; and, as it was, you never would have picked him from a crowd as any thing but a hussar out of uniform, or a brigand perverted to honest life. His peculiarity was, (and this I foresee is to be an ugly sentence,) that he had peculiarities which did not seem peculiar. He was full of genius for his art, but the canvass which served him as a vent, gave him no more anxiety than his pocket-handkerchief. He painted in the palace, or wiped his forehead on a warm day with equally small care, to all appearance, and he had brought his mother and two sisters to Italy, and supported them by a most heroic economy and industry—all the while looking as if the "*silver moon*" and all the small change of the stars would scarce serve him for a day's pocket-money. Indeed, the more I knew of McDonald, the more I became convinced that there was another man built over him. The painter was inside. And if he had free thoroughfare and use of the outer man's windows and ivory door, he was at any rate barred from hanging out the smallest sign or indication of being at any time "*within*." Think as hard as he would—devise, combine, study, or glow with enthusiasm—the proprietor of the front door exhibited the same careless and smiling bravery of mien, behaving invariably as if he had the whole tenement to himself, and was neither proud of, nor interested in the doings of his more spiritual inmate—leading you to suppose, almost, that the latter, though billeted upon him, had not been properly

introduced. The thatch of this common tenement was of jetty black hair, curling in most opulent prodigality, and, altogether it was a house that Hadad, the fallen spirit, might have chosen, when becoming incarnate to tempt the sister of Absalom.

Perhaps you have been in Florence, dear reader, and know by what royal liberality artists are permitted to bring their easels into the splendid apartments of the palace, and copy from the priceless pictures on the walls. At the time I have my eye upon, (some few years ago,) McDonald was making a beginning of a copy of Titian's *Bella*, and near him stood the easel of a female artist who was copying from the glorious picture of "*Judith and Holofernes*," in the same apartment. Mademoiselle Folie, (so she was called by the elderly lady who always accompanied her) was a small and very gracefully formed creature, with the plainest face in which attraction could possibly reside. She was a passionate student of her art, pouring upon it apparently the entire fulness of her life, and as unconsciously forgetful of her personal impression on those around her, as if she wore the invisible ring of Gyges. The deference with which she was treated by her staid companion drew some notice upon her, however, and her progress, in the copy she was making, occasionally gathered the artists about her easel; and, altogether, her position among the silent and patient company at work in the different halls of the palace, was one of affectionate and tacit respect. McDonald was her nearest neighbour, and they frequently looked over each other's pictures, but, as they were both foreigners in Florence, (she of Polish birth, as he understood,) their conversation was in French or Italian, neither of which languages were fluently familiar to Græme, and it was limited generally to expressions of courtesy or brief criticism of each other's labours.

As I said before, it was a "*proof-impression*" of a celestial summer's morning, and the thermometer stood at heavenly idleness. McDonald sat with his maul-stick across his knees, drinking from Titian's picture. An artist, who had lounged in from the next room, had hung himself by the crook of his arm over a high peg, in his comrade's easel, and every now and then he volunteered an observation to which he expected no particular answer.

"When I remember how little beauty I have seen in the world," said Ingarde, (this artist,) "I am inclined to believe with Saturninus, that there is no resurrection of bodies, and that only the spirits of the good return into the body of the Godhead—for what is ugliness to do in heaven!"

McDonald only said, "*hm—hm!*"

"Or rather," said Ingarde again, "I should like to fashion a creed for myself, and believe that nothing was immortal but what was heavenly, and that the good among men and the beautiful among women would be the only reproductions hereafter. How will this little plain woman look in the streets of the New Jerusalem, for example? Yet she expects, as we all do, to be recognizable by her friends in heaven, and, of course, to have the same irredeemably plain face! (Does she understand English, by the way—for she might not be altogether pleased with my theory!)"

"I have spoken to her very often," said McDonald, "and I think English is Hebrew to her—but my theory of beauty crosses at least one corner of your argument, my friend! I believe that the original type of every human face is beautiful, and that every human being could be made beautiful, without, in any essential particular, destroying the visible identity. The likeness preserved in the faces of a family through several generations is modified by the bad mental qualities, and the bad health of those who hand it down. Remove these modifications, and, without destroying the family likeness, you would take away all that mars the beauty of its particular type. An individual countenance is an integral work of God's making, and God 'saw that it was good' when he made it. *Ugliness*, as you phrase it, is the damage that type of countenance has received from the sin and suffering of life. But the type can be restored, and will be, doubtless, in heaven!"

"And you think that little woman's face could be made beautiful?"

"I know it."

"Try it, then! Here is your copy of Titian's 'Bella,' all finished but the face. Make an *apotheosis* portrait of your neighbour, and while it harmonizes with the body of Titian's beauty, still leave it recognizable as her portrait, and I'll give in to your theory—believing in all other miracles, if you like, at the same time!"

Ingarde laughed, as he went back to his own picture, and McDonald, after sitting a few minutes lost in reverie, turned his easel so as to get a painter's view of his female neighbour. He thought she coloured slightly as he fixed his eyes upon her; but, if so, she apparently became very soon unconscious of his gaze, and he was soon absorbed himself in the task to which his friend had so mockingly challenged him.

## II.

[Excuse me, dear reader, while with two episodes I build a bridge over which you can cross a chasm of a month in my story.]

TO GRÆME McDONALD.

Sir,—I am entrusted with a delicate commission, which I know not how to broach to you, except by simple proposal. Will you forgive my abrupt brevity, if I inform you, without further preface, that the Countess Nyschriem, a Polish lady of high

birth and ample fortune, does you the honour to propose for your hand. If you are disengaged, and your affections are not irrevocably given to another, I can conceive no sufficient obstacle to your acceptance of this brilliant connection. The countess is twenty-two, and not beautiful, it must in fairness be said; but she has high qualities of head and heart, and is worthy any man's respect and affection. She has seen you, of course, and conceived a passion for you, of which this is the result. I am directed to add, that should you consent, the following conditions are imposed—that you marry her within four days, making no inquiry except as to her age, rank, and property, and that, without previous interview, she come veiled to the altar.

An answer is requested in the course of to-morrow, addressed to "The Count Hanswald, minister of His Majesty the King of Prussia."

I have the honour, &c. &c.

HANSWALD.

McDonald's answer was as follows:—

TO HIS EXCELLENCY, HANSWALD, &c. &c.

You will pardon me that I have taken two days to consider the extraordinary proposition made me in your letter. The subject, since it is to be entertained a moment, requires, perhaps, still further reflection—but my reply shall be definite, and as prompt as I can bring myself to be, in a matter so important.

My first impulse was to return your letter, declining the honour you would do me, and thanking the lady for the compliment of her choice. My first reflection was the relief and happiness which an independence would bring to a mother and two sisters dependent, now, on the precarious profits of my pencil. And I first consented to ponder the matter with this view, and I now consent to marry (frankly) for this advantage. But still I have a condition to propose.

In the studies I have had the opportunity to make of the happiness of imaginative men in matrimony, I have observed that their two worlds of fact and fancy were seldom under the control of one mistress. It must be a very extraordinary woman, of course, who, with the sweet domestic qualities needful for common life, possesses at the same time the elevation and spirituality requisite for the ideal of the poet and painter. And I am not certain, in any case, whether the romance of some secret passion, fed and pursued in the imagination only, be not the inseparable necessity of a poetical nature. For the imagination is incapable of being chained, and it is at once disenchanted and set roaming by the very possession and certainty, which are the charms of matrimony. Whether exclusive devotion of all the faculties of mind and body be the fidelity exacted in marriage, is a question every woman should consider before making a husband of an imaginative man. As I have not seen the countess, I can generalize on the subject without offence, and she is the best judge whether she can chain

my fancy as well as my affections, or yield to an imaginative mistress the devotion of so predominant a quality of my nature. I can only promise her the constancy of a husband.

Still—if this were taken for only vague speculation—she might be deceived. I must declare, frankly, that I am, at present, completely possessed with an imaginative passion. The object of it is probably as poor as I, and I could never marry her were I to continue free. Probably, too, the high-born countess would be but little jealous of her rival, for she has no pretensions to beauty, and is a humble artist. But, in painting this lady's portrait—(a chance experiment, to try whether so plain a face could be made lovely)—I have penetrated to so beautiful an *inner* countenance, (so to speak)—I have found charms of expression so subtly masked to the common eye—I have traced such exquisite lineament of soul and feeling, visible, for the present, I believe, to my eye only—that, while I live, I shall do irresistible homage to her as the embodiment of my fancy's want, the very spirit and essence suitable to rule over my unseen world of imagination. Marry whom I will, and be true to her as I shall, this lady will (perhaps unknown to herself) be my mistress in dream-land and reverie.

This inevitable license allowed—my ideal world and its devotions, that is to say, left entirely to myself—I am ready to accept the honour of the countess's hand. If, at the altar, she should hear me murmur another name *with* her own—(for the bride of my fancy must be present when I wed, and I shall link the vows to both in one ceremony)—let her not fear for my constancy to herself, but let her remember that it is not to offend her hereafter, if the name of the other come to my lip in dreams.

Your excellency may command my time and presence.

With high consideration, &c.

GRÆME McDONALD.

Rather agitated than surprised seemed Mademoiselle Folie, when, the next day, as she arranged her brushes upon the shelf of her easel, her handsome neighbour commenced, in the most fluent Italian he could command, to invite her to his wedding. Very much surprised was McDonald when she interrupted him in English, and begged him to use his native tongue, as madame, her attendant, would not then understand him. He went on delightedly in his own honest language, and

explained to her his imaginative admiration, though he felt compunctious, somewhat, that so unreal a sentiment should bring the visible blood into her cheek. She thanked him—drew the cloth from the upper part of her own picture, and showed him an admirable portrait of his handsome features, substituted for the masculine head of Judith in the original from which she copied—and promised to be at his wedding, and to listen sharply for her murmured name in his vow at the altar. He chanced to wear at the moment a ring of red cornelian, and he agreed with her that she should stand where he could see her, and, at the moment of his putting the marriage ring upon his bride's finger, that she should put on this, and for ever after wear it, as a token of having received his spiritual vows of devotion.

The day came, and the splendid equipage of the countess dashed into the square of Santa Maria, with a veiled bride and a cold bridegroom, and deposited them at the steps of the church. And they were followed by other coronetted equipages, and gaily dressed people dismounted from each—the mother and sisters of the bridegroom, gaily dressed, among them, but looking pale with incertitude and dread.

The veiled bride was small, but she moved gracefully up the aisle, and met her future husband at the altar with a low curtsy, and made a sign to the priest to proceed with the ceremony. McDonald was colourless, but firm, and indeed showed little interest, except by an anxious look now and then among the crowd of spectators at the sides of the altar. He pronounced with a steady voice, but when the ring was to be put on, he looked around for an instant, and then suddenly, and to the great scandal of the church, clasped his bride with a passionate ejaculation to his bosom. *The cornelian ring was on her finger*—and the Countess Nyschriem and Mademoiselle Folie—his bride and his fancy-queen—were one!

This curious event happened in Florence some eight years since—as all people then there will remember—and it was prophesied of the countess that she would have but a short lease of her handsome and gay husband. But time does not say so. A more constant husband than McDonald to his plain and titled wife, and one more continuously in love, does not travel and buy pictures, and patronize artists—though few except yourself and I, dear reader, know the philosophy of it!



## THE CROSS ENGLISHMAN.

BY A TRAVELLER.

LOVE of one's country is doubtless a virtue, and a man who is wanting in the instincts which ripen into this sentiment, has a defect of character by which he individually, and the community in which he lives, are losers. Strange that so amiable a quality as this should be liable to such gross perversion. Why can we not cherish our country without a feeling of ill will to others? Other countries may be great and prosperous, without diminishing *our* greatness or *our* prosperity. Why cannot we be satisfied without comparisons? But so it is, and must long continue to be. If the United States had the Connecticut for its north-eastern boundary, we should entertain very different feelings towards, and opinions of, the people across the river, from those now entertained, and the Sabine limits our sympathies on the south-west. When war prevailed among nations, there was some excuse for the bitter feelings between them, extending even to individuals. Perhaps it is the impression of the sentiments then engendered that we are now subject to, and if the present condition of peace should be maintained, the bad side of our virtue of patriotism might not appear so obtrusively as now. An English liberal observed to me that he despaired of any modification of the constitution of his country until the generation who remembered the guillotine had passed away.

Our history will always have that in it which will tend to produce unkind feelings on the part of American youth toward our mother country; but perhaps those who only remember "the last war" are more reasonable than their grandfathers, who were actors in the events of the revolution, or their fathers, who had lively recollections of these, and took their part in the doings of the second contest. I confess myself, when thinking of England, to have been always labouring with recollections of the burning of Washington, the attack on Baltimore, and the probable march against Philadelphia. The deep distress and close anxiety which pervaded the mind of my mother when my father was in camp, cannot be effaced from my recollection. The light in which the English tourists who came among us after the peace of 1814 held up the country and its institutions served not a little to keep up this feeling, and as I grew up, there was always a struggle in my mind between the desire to be reasonable, and the influence of early impressions. The Englishman of my fancy often remained the "John Bull" exhibited in the caricatures of the "Wasp and Frolic," the "Constitution and Guerriere," and the like. Prejudice takes sly opportunities to overcome one, and when we think we have escaped

from her, suddenly stoops down in our path, trips up our heels, and over we go, to our infinite mortification, if not to our personal damage. In some such way prejudice brought me to the ground early one misty morning in Glasgow, giving me a fall and a lesson.

The evening before I had been laughing with a friend over the various matters which an American traveller might collect in Britain as offsets to the amiable incidents in American life which fill the pages of Hall, Hamilton and Trollope. I had gone so far as to give him the table of contents of a chapter or two of *Trollopiana*, as we agreed to call the work. This chat must have called up the phantasm of John Bull, the cross-grained surly fellow of my youthful fancy, though I had then no notion of the sort. I was to visit the Clyde Iron works with this friend, and to set out in the earliest train of railroad cars which passed the works. The short days of winter in the latitude of Glasgow make six o'clock appear very early, and when the porter knocked at my door, there was not a stray ray of sunlight to give a hope of day. The street lamps were wrapped in mist, and there was a chill upon the air which sunk into the very marrow. Think how desolate to leave one's bed on such a morning before six to face a driving mist! My teeth fairly chattered while dressing, and it required no small resolution to pass the coffee-room, where a coal-fire was blazing, before which the drowsy porter sat, to tempt the morning air. I did pass, however, and found my way to the front door. It was double and triple bolted, and would not let me out. I rattled the bolts as loudly as was consistent with the peace of the lodgers, expecting that the drowsy porter in the coffee-room would come to my relief—not so. Not a little irritated at his indifference, I dashed towards the room to awaken him, and on reaching the door, saw him still at the fire, his face resting between his open palms, taking that uneasy sort of snooze which the failing muscles of the arms resting upon the knees permits: I called, perhaps somewhat sharply, for the fellow's conduct was vexatious, "come open the door for me." I had roused a sleeping tiger in the shape of a fellow lodger! The effect of my words fairly electrified me. He raised his face from his hands, turned upon me two bloodshot eyes, the expression of which, all unsuited to the occasion, was exactly that of Cain in David's picture of the first murderer meditating his brother's death. "Call the porter!" were his uncivil words, spoken in a loud and angry tone. "Surly monster" was on my lips, as the porter passed and opened the door. How

differently, thought I, as I walked along the dimly lighted streets to the house of my Scotch friend, how differently should I have been treated in a hotel at home by a fellow lodger. This cross-grained Englishman is incensed at being taken for a servant, perhaps does not choose to do what he considers a menial service. We Americans have doubtless our infirmities, but we are disposed to render mutual assistance in such circumstances as these. How much more amiable our habit than this selfish English way, which requires every man to take care of himself, and this surly fashion of always standing on one's dignity.

Exercise soon removed the hotel and out-door chill from my system, set my spirits into their more usual flow, and enabled me as we wended our way together to the railroad depot to give my Scotch friend a new chapter of "Trollopiana," in which the "cross Englishman" figured as the hero.

We had paid for our tickets, taken the places which their numbers assigned to us in the cars, the bell rang once and twice its warning, the noise of escaping steam had ceased, the engine had begun to wheeze, and we to move forward, when a person appeared through the mist, running as a man does only when a thought too late for the railroad car; it was my fellow lodger of Comrie's hotel, "the cross Englishman." Now he had a right to be angry—with his watch—with himself—with the cabman—with the cook—the conductor's watch,—something, or somebody. On we went—there was no help for him. It was too much to ask of me or my friend to sympathize very deeply in the present obvious anger of the belated "cross Englishman."

Great is the wealth which the Clyde iron works have yielded to Glasgow, iron transmuted into gold by the agency of coal. The use of heated air instead of cold in the furnace blast has added greatly

to the profit of the iron manufacture. It was an interesting sight to see the streams of molten iron and slag flowing from the furnace mouth with a fluidity which only the hot air blast gives. Coal reducing the iron from its ore, and melting it; coal heating the air for the blast; coal raising steam to drive the bellows.

The various ingenious modes of heating the air occupied us long in their examination. I hoped that my countrymen would have the good sense to send some one to examine these works, to obtain thus cheaply the experience of others instead of acquiring it by the loss of their capital and time. French engineers of mines had been here upon the spot, had obtained minute information, and made elaborate drawings of every part of the works and machinery. The morning wore on, breakfast time had passed, the fresh air had sharpened our appetites; we began to make our way out of the labyrinth of furnaces built and building, piles of iron and ore, coal and coke, towards a village near by, when who should appear at a distance, coming along the path we were ascending, but the "cross Englishman."

Now for a *pleasant* meeting, said my friend, the path is too narrow to escape contact. We neared each other, suddenly the same impulse appeared to move the cross Englishman and me,—we quickened the pace with which we were approaching each other,—to the consternation of my Scotch friend we broke from a walk into a run, we rushed together with arms stretched forwards—and my hand was in the grasp—the cordial—friendly grapple of the "cross Englishman!" He was an early tried, kind friend from *home*, on the errand of inquiring into those very iron mysteries—a genuine true-hearted Yankee, who by a disturbed night's rest, and the spirit of national prejudice, had been converted into a "cross Englishman."

## THE COUNT OF REVILLAGIGEDO.

FROM THE NOTE BOOK OF A TRAVELLER IN MEXICO.

AMONG the fifty noblemen who held the office of Viceroy under the Spanish domination, it was to be expected that some few should make their government remarkable for something more than pompous display and oppressive extortion. One of the most distinguished of this better class was the Count of Revillagigedo, who was viceroy towards the close of the last century. He was a man of great energy and decision, zealous for the advancement of the country committed to his care, and apparently rather uncompromising in the measures which he took to promote it. He laid out roads, constructed bridges, raised embankments round the lakes, had the principal cities well paved and lighted, and established an efficient police. His name was as great a terror to the brigands of that day, as it is now to foreigners unskilled in Spanish gutturals. His most inconsiderate act was perhaps that of giving his sesquipedalian cognomen to a group of islands off the west coast of Mexico, which were surveyed during his administration.

His government is still well remembered, and many stories are told of him, evincing a rather whimsical character. He was accustomed to make nightly rounds in the city, in order to assure himself that his regulations for its quiet and security were carried into effect. On one occasion it is related that in walking through a street which he had ordered to be paved, he suddenly stopped, and sent a messenger to the director of the work, requiring his instant presence. The usual phrase with which he wound up such commands was "*lo espero aqui*," (*I await him here*,) which had the effect of producing an extraordinary degree of celerity in those who received them. On this occasion the officer, who was enjoying his midnight repose, sprang from his bed on receiving the startling summons, and rushed half dressed, with disordered haste, to learn the purport of what he presumed to be a pressing and most important business.

He found the viceroy standing stiff and composed on the side-walk. When the panting officer had paid his obeisance to his master, "I regret to have been obliged to disturb you, *Senor*," said the latter, "in order to call your attention to the state of your pavement. You will observe that this flag-stone is not perfectly even," touching with his toe one that rose about half an inch above the rest of the side walk. "I had the misfortune to strike my foot against it this evening, and it has occurred to me that others may be as unlucky as myself, unless the fault be immediately remedied. You will attend to it, sir, and report to me on the subject to-morrow morning." With these words he continued his

round, leaving the officer in a state of stupefaction; but it is asserted that the pavements of Mexico, for the rest of his Excellency's government, were unexceptionable.

Another anecdote, of a similar kind, places his peculiarity of temper in a still stronger light. In perambulating the city one pleasant evening about sunset, he found that a street in which he was walking terminated abruptly against a mass of wretched tenements, apparently the lurking-places of vice and beggary. He inquired how it happened that the street was carried no farther, and that these hovels were allowed to exist, but the only information he could gain was that such had always been the case, and that none of the authorities had considered themselves bound to abate the nuisance. He sent immediately for the *corregidor*—"tell him that I await him here," he concluded, in a tone that had the effect of bringing that functionary at once to the spot. He received orders to open without delay a broad and straight avenue through this quarter as far as the barrier of the city. It must be finished, was the imperious command, that very night, so far as to allow the viceroy to drive through it on his way to mass the next morning. With this the count turned on his heel, and the astonished *corregidor* was left to reflect upon his disagreeable predicament. The fear of losing his office, and perhaps of some worse consequence, gave him energy. No time was to be wasted. All his subordinate officers were instantly summoned, and labourers were collected from every part of the city. No expense was spared. The very buildings that were to be removed sent forth crowds of *lazzaroni* (or *leperos* as this class is styled in Mexico) willing for a few reales to aid in destroying the walls that harboured them, secure of finding shelter in other quarters when they needed it. A hundred torches shed their radiance over the scene. All night long the shouts of the workmen, the noise of the pickaxe and crowbar, the crash of falling roofs, and the rumbling of carts kept the city in a fever of excitement. Precisely at sunrise the state-carriage, with the viceroy, his family and suite, left the palace, and rattled over the pavements in the direction from whence the tumult had proceeded. At length the new street opened before them. Ten thousand workmen, in a double file of dirty faces and toil-stained hands, fell back on either side, and made the air resound with vivas as they passed. Through clouds of dust, over the unpaved earth, strewn with fragments of plaster, between lines of split and dismantled houses, the carriage swept along, till, at the junction of the new street with the road leading to the suburbs, the *cor-*

regard, hat in hand, with a smile of conscious desert, stepped forward to receive his Excellency, and listen to the commendation bestowed on this prompt and skilful execution of his commands. Should any one be unreasonable enough to doubt the truth of this story, let him be aware that the street is still standing to testify to it, and is known by the name of the *Calle de Revillagigedo* to this day.

"These stories give some idea of the kind of authority exercised by the viceroys, which was certainly far more arbitrary than that of their sovereign in his Spanish dominions. There is another adventure, told to display the excellence of his police system, in which the Count figures after a rather melodramatic fashion. It seems that among the Creole nobles who, with the high officers of government, made up the viceroy's splendid court, there was a certain old Marquess de —, a stiff, formal sprig of aristocracy, whom fortune had endowed with great estates and two remarkably pretty daughters, and it was doubted by some whether the care of his money or his daughters gave him the most trouble. The eldest, who bore her father's title, was celebrated for her beauty, of a kind uncommon in those regions, for she had a fair skin, blue eyes, and golden hair. Hence she was everywhere known as the fair-haired Marquessa. Her sister who, on the contrary, was very dark, with eyes like a gazelle, and raven hair, was called the pretty brunette. But different as they were in looks, and perhaps in character, there was one trait in which they agreed amazingly, and as it is one very rare in their sex, we may suppose it to have been a kind of family failing. It is asserted that they were the least bit in the world capricious, or, if we must say it, coquetish towards their admirers. It is unknown how many offers they had refused of the wealthiest grandees and most gallant cavaliers about the court, and the poor marquess, who was nothing of a domestic tyrant, and desired to govern only by soft measures, was quite at his wit's end to find out some way of persuading them to know their own minds.

One night he was aroused from sleep by a message from the viceroy, who expected him in the palace. Not for his best estate would the loyal marquess have kept the representative of his sovereign waiting one moment longer than necessary. Though wondering what reason of state could require his presence at that unusual hour, he dressed himself in haste, and hurried to the palace. The viceroy was in his cabinet, surrounded by several gentlemen of his household and officers of the police, all, as it seemed, in a state of anxious curiosity and suspense. "Marquess," said the viceroy, "my lieutenant of police here, complains that you did not take proper care to secure the doors of your mansion last evening."

"I assure your highness," replied the marquess in great surprise, "that my steward locked both

the great gate and the outer door, according to the invariable custom of my house, before retiring for the night."

"But have you not a postern opening into the next street," returned the count, "and are you equally heedful with regard to it? But in short," he continued, "you must know that this watchful lieutenant of mine has saved you to-night from robbery."

"Robbery! your Excellency. Is it possible?" ejaculated the old marquess, startled for a moment out of his habitual composure.

"Yes, and of the worst kind," replied the viceroy. "The felons were taken in the act of making off with your most exquisite treasures, which are now restored to you." At these words, a door at the side of the cabinet was thrown open, and the astounded marquess saw, but could hardly believe his eyes, his two daughters, dressed as for travelling, and clasped in each other's arms. They seemed overwhelmed with confusion, the fair locks all dishevelled, and the black eyes drowned in tears.

"And these are the robbers," added the viceroy, pointing to a door on the opposite side, which also flew open. The marquess turned mechanically, and saw two of the gayest, handsomest, most dissipated and worthless gallants about the court, whom he recollected as occasional visitors at his house. They appeared no less confused, and with their embarrassment there was an evident mixture of alarm. The truth now began to break on the mind of the old noble.

"You see, marquess," said the count, "that but for the vigilance of my police, you would have had the honour to be father-in-law to two of the greatest scamps in my viceroyalty. Look what a scrape your carelessness has brought me into, my dear sir. I am obliged to wound the feelings of the two most lovely ladies in my court, to save them from the machinations of scoundrels unworthy of their charms, and I fear that they will never forgive me, (whereupon the opinion goes that they forgave him on the spot.) Farewell, Senor Marquess; take my advice, and brick up your postern door. Calderon was a wise man, and he tells us that a house with two doors is hard to keep.\* As for these young scapegraces, they sail for Manila in the next galleon, where they can exercise their fascinating powers on the *chinas* and *mulatas* of the Philippines. Good night, gentlemen all, the comedy is over."

As this story, like the others, rests on the grave authority of gossip and tradition, there can be no doubt of its general truth, allowing for the fair quantum of embellishment to which such narratives are entitled. It is only to be regretted that no account is given of the fate which afterwards befell the two pretty coquettes.

\* One of Calderon's comedies is named "*Casa con dos puertas mala es de guardar*."